



United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20540-0000

BILL NELSON
FLORIDA

June 24, 2013

The Honorable Rick Scott
Governor of Florida
The Capitol
400 S. Monroe Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399

SENT VIA EMAIL WITH HARD COPY TO FOLLOW

Dear Gov. Scott:

I am writing to once again urge that you call the state Legislature back into a special session to reconsider the decision not to expand Medicaid coverage in Florida.

You had initially voiced support for, and the Florida Senate passed, a bill that would have enabled Medicaid to provide health care coverage to an additional one million low-income Floridians. But when the state House refused to consider such an expansion, the legislation died.

As a result, our state now stands to lose an estimated \$51 billion over the next 10 years in federal funding it would have received to cover the cost of expanding Medicaid coverage. We will also lose between 70,000 and 122,000 new jobs that recent studies show an expansion of Medicaid would have created.

As state Sen. Don Gaetz has been quoted as saying, "A big concern is if state lawmakers decide not to accept the [federal] money, more than 100,000 high paying medical jobs may not come to Florida."

Meantime, Floridians are left to pick up the tab as those who can't afford insurance continue turning to hospital emergency rooms for their primary care - where costs are the highest. By one estimate, covering the health-care costs of the uninsured adds about 30 percent to the price employers have to pay to provide health insurance to their employees.

Some of our state's biggest employers, including Walt Disney World, Publix Super Markets and Florida Power & Light, are part of coalitions that recently have acknowledged their support for expanding health-care coverage to our most-impooverished residents.

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Earlier this month you traveled to Paris for an air show and while there announced a French firm would move to Florida over the next several years and create 40 jobs in our state. I congratulate you. But, if you were to call a special session of the Legislature and urge state lawmakers to listen to the people and business leaders of Florida, the expansion of Medicaid alone could create 3,000 times that many jobs.

That's based on a University of Florida study estimating that over the next 10 years 121,945 new jobs would result from Medicaid expansion; and, on a Families USA calculation that the expansion would create 70,000 new jobs.

While Florida isn't the only state that's refusing to expand Medicaid under the new federal health care law, it has until January to reconsider. But with the next legislative session not until next spring, this can't be done without a special session in the next few months.

Sincerely,

Bill Nelson